



NATHAN JOHNSON
STATE SENATOR • DISTRICT 16

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SENATOR JOHNSON ISSUES STATEMENT ON ALLEN PREMIUM OUTLETS MASS SHOOTING

AUSTIN, TX – Senator Johnson issued the following statement regarding the tragic mass shooting at the Allen Premium Outlets in Allen, Texas, that occurred on May, 6, 2023.

“Another bolt of horror. Another grisly round of tragic death, unfathomable grief, and rising fear and anxiety. Desperate to protect ourselves, we slide further into violence.

It reaches our every common space. We add locks and sensors, hire guards, and arm ourselves, yet deadly violence still finds us. It’s getting worse. How do we reverse the deadly slide into an increasingly violent culture?

The response by Texas elected officials to date – making it more convenient for more people with less training to have more guns in more places – isn’t working. And although it’s wise to protect and defend ourselves, it’s delusional to think that we can satisfactorily “harden” our world against gun violence.

Similarly, addressing the gravely deficient state of mental healthcare in Texas is a welcome shift in priorities, and I applaud recent efforts (if not always the rhetoric). Still, it certainly won’t solve the problem of gun violence. It’s a rhetorical pivot from the underlying reality that we have a more general and pervasive problem with gun violence in our culture. What’s more, to attribute gun violence to “mental health problems” in Texas is to falsely stigmatize the millions who struggle with mental health and distract from the mission of mental healthcare professionals.

It’s time to implement gun safety laws. We have a panoply from which to choose: extreme risk (“red flag”) orders, background checks, better training, and many more. We’ve filed them session after session, but no action has been taken. That’s puzzling since most of these non-intrusive measures have overwhelming support among gun owners and ardent supporters of 2nd amendment rights.

Good evidence indicates that gun safety laws reduce gun violence. While the evidence may not convince some, the evidence is there.

And although we’re unlikely to resolve that debate any time soon, we have good reason to enact gun safety legislation now. Irrespective of whether passing any particular law or set of laws will reduce gun violence, it might. Isn’t it worth trying? Don’t people,



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particularly those harmed, also deserve for us to send a message that we care and that we're willing to try to reverse the course we're on? That in and of itself is worth something, I think.

Let us hope that the sadly novel act of passing gun safety legislation will signal or perhaps even initiate a cultural shift, away from the violent environment it seems we ourselves have cultivated.”

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About Senator Nathan Johnson: *Re-elected with bipartisan support in 2022, Senator Johnson proudly represents almost a million Dallas County residents in the growing and rapidly diversifying Senate District 16. Johnson currently serves as Vice-Chair of the Senate Committee on Jurisprudence; Senate Committee on Business & Commerce; Senate Committee on Water, Agriculture & Rural Affairs; and Senate Committee on Administration.*

